THE ANARCHIST

WAS IT MURDER ?

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FREEDOM AND ORGANISATION

Someone once asked a clergyman what he thought about virtue.

" Virtue? I'm for it .. Sin? I'm against it. "

So it is with freedom. Everybody is 'for' it. But this agreement ends when we ask 'for whom and for what?'

The "free enterprise" capitalists want freedom to exploit the workers. They criticise government for limiting their activities. Yet when they need protection against the workers or when their profits are threatened by other capitalists they clamour for government intervention.

The State itself carefully protects the privileges it derives from the exercise of power.. it will fight any group that threatens its interests and assist those who are in accord with those interests. The State at all times claims the right to curtail or abolish the freedom of its subjects. Whether that right is exercised in the name of capitalism or of "socialism" does not alter the basic nature of power.

Libertarians, and a growing number of people who do not think of themselves as such, reject the grotesque distortions of the concept of freedom used by the State. They agree that the liberty and wellbeing of the individual should be the aim of social life. The institutions which perpetuate the domination of man by man should be replaced by a society in which every person will have the right to live as he wishes provided he does not infringe upon the equal right of others to do likewise.

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It is on this issue that certain "individualists" dissent. The latter assert that there is a fundamental antagonism between society and the individual. Some even proclaim that the "herd" or the "masses" are incapable of freedom. This is reserved for the elite - certain intellectuals who can establish an oasis of freedom for themselves, disdaining contact with the rough and tumble of everyday society.

They lack faith in the creative capacities of the "masses". A bizarre bohemianism, a fascination for such sexual fads as Wilhelm Reich's orgone box, are poor substitutes for the realities of the need of the worker for emancipation.

Some consider any form of organisation as a violation of their individuality. Still others - calling themselves " primitivists " - who would turn their backs on technical progress and who look on every positive value of modern civilisation as a corruption of nature. Unfortunately the escapism of a wide variety of anarchists has in the past frequently hindered practical achievement.

The hermit who lives alone does not have to contend with the rights of others. He can have absolute individual liberty if he is willing to renounce the benefits of social life. This seems a rather poverty-stricken liberty as it inhibits the growth of the individual. Human society nurtures the individual and in turn is enriched by him. Proudhon emphasised this when he wrote:

"The freest man is he who has the most relations with his fellow man - from the social point of view liberty and solidarity are identical."

Positive freedom is social freedom.

Society is the multiplicity of relationships, objective and subjective, through which the members composing it realise their individuality. In this sense there can be no contradiction between the individual and society. We are individualists in the sense that we want all men to be free. We are socialists in that we want equality for all human beings in a free society. We conclude that for such a society neither liberty, equality or fraternity can stand alone - they are all indispensable. All the works of the great anarchists - such as Bakunin, Nettlau? Kropotkin, Malatesta, Leval, Rocker - point to the indivisibility of freedom and socialism.

The greatest misconception of anarchism is the proposition that we do not believe in organisation. We certainly reject authoritarian organisation. We want a functional society in which the voluntary organisations of the people will co-ordinate their activities (and requirements) on the principles of federalism and free agreement. Federalism has been rightly described as " the organisation of freedom. "

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Throughout the ages mankind has revolted against tyranny and injustice. They have fought for individual and social freedom. The will to liberty, the practice of mutual aid free agreement and solidarity are not abstractions. They are dynamic forces. They are the progressive tendencies in human life.

G.K.

AROUND TOWN WITH GORDON L.

Find the Fascist

Arthur Smith the Australian 'Nazi' leader has been set up with a shop in Summer Hill. Who says there is no money in right-wing politics? Graeme Royce, his cute little kite flying friend, has officially (with a notice in the HERALD) broken away from him and has been associated with the 'Arab-Australian Friendship League.' Application has already been made to the U.A.R. for funds, but it seems President Nasser is careful of his anti-semites and wishes a dossier to be completed on each member to avoid another scandal like that in Ashfield a couple of years ago.

Has Howard Williams the American Nazi and right hand boy of Rockwell left the country yet? His face was seen at a few Vietnam demonstrations last year (at them not in them) but the security police were too busy following 'Comms' to notice the odd Rockwell boy around the place. Reports say he was seen entering the ' Australian Action Co-ordinating Committee Rooms ' at 50 Victoria St., Kings Cross, a couple of Wednesday nights ago. It makes you wonder where 'red rat' posters lead to.

Mutinies?

Unconfirmed gossip floating around Sydney reports that in recent months there have been two mutinies of 'National Servicemen' at Kapooka army camp, the last one being put down at bayonet point by 'regulars.'

Inquiries were made into these reports, and also the report of a mass desertion of twenty national servicemen after the last mutiny but no official confirmation of these reports could be obtained. The Government remains silent.

ANARCHISM AND THE FILM

Shown in Sydney (at the Gala) early this year, " The Balcony " was undoubtedly one of the most anarchistic films to be made in recent years. The main thesis of the film is that authority is, for those in power, a form of sexual release and a fraud.

The film is set in an abandoned television studio, operating now as a sort of way-out brothel. Here the clients come, to dress in appropriate clothes and in the appropriate setting act out their sexual fantasy with a girl of their choice.

The whole film was rather heavy handed in its angry revelation of authority as a fraud which the masses accept to their detriment. The point was hammered home not only by the fantastic plot and setting, but also by the speeches which various characters made throughout the film. This contrasts with the implied anarchism of such films as " The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner," " One Eyed Jacks, " David Miller's " Lonely are the Brave, " Bunuel's " Diary of a Chambermaid, " and his (banned in Australia) "Vridiana."

Art v. Propaganda

The film is essentially an art form, though, like painting or literature it is not always used purely that way. But the pure artist, like the serious musician or poet, must beware of the political or socially significant message. " The Balcony " would have been more successful if the explanatory speeches had been left out. Shakespeare could get away with it, but he was writing for the stage, where amplification is the rule. The film, having the ability to present reality so much more convincingly, must also be more subtle. People do not soliloquise in real life. Not usually anyway.

The distortion of time and space is the essence of the cinematic art, and the simple recording of events before the camera, say the filmed stage play, is not good film making, no matter how good the play. Indeed as Francis Wyndham points out in a recent " Encounter," formalism is reaching plague proportions among some of the avant-garde film-makers:

"Serious films today tend to concentrate, with an incestuous cannibalism, on purely cinematic material: endlessly celebrating, in self-consciously affectionate satire, a medium which has produced too few masterpieces to justify this narcissistic obsession."

Anarchism today is not a popular idea, but the basic truths of anarchy find sympathy with most people. Indeed, the basic truths are about all that committed anarchists find agreement in. Because anarchism is not widely accepted, anarchists tend to become 'men with a message'. For the anarchist in a position to spread his ideas through the potent medium of the screen this is a danger. The film maker should imply his message through the action and situation of his characters. If he does not he is no better off than the lantern slide lecturer. He must show a moving vision of life with an obvious relevance to reality, subjective as it may be. This places no bounds on anarchism in the film. But preaching and film making have never mixed well.

The big producers (i.e.financiers) have been forced out of mass production and they must now set their sights on either "Blockbuster" spectaculars or the "Art House" market. And it is in the Art Houses that the

smaller but more serious filmmakers have their chance to show their wares. Here the vision and the anger of the anarchist can be displayed, though as I mentioned before, the anger must be disciplined by the art.

The Documentary

The history of the documentary is closely tied to that of social reform, especially in the British Commonwealth. Ever since the first practicable movie camera was made, real events as they happen have been recorded on film, but it was not until a group of angry young men in England started the documentary movement in 1925 or thereabouts that the constructive use of this ability became a force within the art.

With the unlikely help of the British Post Office, John Grierson and his cohorts started using shots of real people at work. With the motto " the creative interpretation of reality " they set out to bring the people to the people. They showed social injustice and commented on what could be, should be and was being done to remedy it.

This same group of men were responsible for the establishment of the Canadian National Film Board, the Australian Commonwealth Film Unit and the New Zealand National Film Unit. With high social aims they campaigned around the Empire, convincing the various governments that by showing the people to the people, the vast increase in understanding would go more than half way to solving many social problems.

This idea was obviously far too optimistic, and it never worked. With the exception of Canada the respective Film units soon became propaganda outlets for their governments and devoted themselves to producing tourist promotion films and classroom instruction pieces of doubtful value to anyone. But then came television.

TV

The small screen in the living room is in many ways a more flexible outlet. It can take ten minutes of mouthing close-up without becoming boring. The "front man" with his interviews can get closer to many subjects than the remote eye of the cinema camera. It is more intimate, but it is rarely filmic. It is more a branch of journalism than of film. Nevertheless some of the finest film makers around today are working in TV Documentary.

For the direct exposition of facts and ideas to a large and receptive audience, television is supreme, and for the anarchist, or any socially responsible thinker it offers a vast field of action. But may be the great revolution will have to come first, before the Packers and the Duckmantons of this world will let anything be <u>said</u> on their screens.

David Tossman

In the Cellar

Every Monday night at 8 o'clock Sydney Anarchist Group meets in the Cellar of 72 Oxford Street, Paddington (entrance Comber Street). All welcome. Programme as of now:
(Suggestions welcomed)

Sep 19: D. Clarke on Worker Control.
26: J. Flaus on Kibbutz in Israel
Oct 3: Business Meeting.
10: P A R T Y.
17: Group Discussion - Anarchist Community or Not?

Your World by Bill Dwyer

" You are an idiot. "

So spoke Josef Soler, 43, storeman to Judge Goran in the Queen's Square Appeals Court. The accused claimed he was an anarchist, who was the victim of police persecution.

Insufficient details of the case are available to permit logical comment. But several other cases have come to the public notice which might make one wonder whether the courts of law are not infested by idiots. At the very least, it should refute the naive attempts by politicians to identify law with justice in the public mind:

1. On the time-honoured custom by the police of enticing homosexuals in public lavatories, Constable Rowland of Burwood arrested Michael Clifford Cathels for indecent exposure in a park toilet. Magistrate L. Stapleton "considered" the defendant "most likely to commit an offence of that type" and convicted him. On appeal it was discovered that the constable, pursuant to the equally time honoured police custom of lying to secure a conviction, had perjured himself repeatedly. By a lucky chance the accused was acquitted, and the policeman suspended pending inquiry.

2. William Albert Taylor, 65, was knocked down by a truck. In the subsequent court case Mr Justice Taylor (no kin to plaintiff - obviously) was aggrieved by certain remarks of the claimant's lawyer (Clive Evatt Jnr) and dismissed the jury ordering that the case be ineligible for hearing for one year. Later, the Law Association vindicated Mr Evatt. The only loser was the injured workman.

3. When her landlord found Mrs Fay Margaret Allen unable to maintain payment of her rent he took out eviction proceedings against her, and her five children. The Chief Justice in Equity said, in granting the order that he "could not concern myself with the humanities of the situation as this is not my function."

There, in unequivocal language, a Queen's judge states that the law and justice are not to be equated.

LBJ - Saint or Sinner?

" Peace is not merely the absence of shooting," said President Johnson after the 8th Armoured Division of World War II veterans had given him their award as "the American who during the past year had contributed the most toward the cause of peace."

A war crimes tribunal comprising the philosopher, Bertrand Russell, Jean Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, the former Mexican president, Lazaro Cardenas, the German and Swedish playwright Peter Weiss, the Brazilian scientist Jose de Castro and other eminent internationalists propose to try Mr Johnson as a war criminal for the American atrocities in Vietnam. The trial will take place in Paris next November.

White Australia

Despite its rigid exclusion of "coloured" immigrants from this country, the Australian government constantly poses as a model of civilisation and enlightenment.

1. When Sir Percy Spender gave his casting vote on the International Court for what was in effect the continued government of South-West Africa by the South African government it was claimed that he was acting in the capacity of learned judge.

The fact that Sir Percy was just another hack politician pensioned off by his superiors was ignored. That his views might faithfully reflect the opinions of his government was denounced as unjust.

2. Shortly after this event an international seminar on apartheid was held in Brazil. When Mr Hasluck, Minister for External Affairs, was questioned on this he said Brazil was a long way away. When it was pointed out to him that Australia had an embassy there he lamely replied that it was understaffed.

3. Following the assassination of Dr Verwoerd, Sir Robert Menzies (Australia's greatest politician) said he "had admired the intellect, courage and character of Dr Verwoerd." The leader of the Opposition, Mr Calwell who himself narrowly missed death in an assassination bid recently, called it a "crime..cruel and stupid."

Neither Menzies nor Calwell made any protest when Verwoerds policemen killed over sixty Africans in cold blood at Sharpeville.

4. The Sydney daily "Telegraph" (a staunch supporter if not actual voice of the government) editorially justified apartheid (8/9/66). It asked: "How would Australia's white inhabitants feel if they were outnumbered by aborigines?"

This question is rather easily answered - the aborigines in Tasmania were slaughtered to a man while those on the mainland survived only by taking to virtually in-accessible desert.

Dr Strangelove

As the military mind has now established hegemony on our political and social thought their utterances have become more important that the nominal political leaders. U.S. General Wallace M. Greene has warned both Australia and New Zealand that if they withdraw from Vietnam they will be liable to attack. This is a far from subtle hint from Uncle Sam that it would be prepared to withdraw its protection - if we are to suppose it is needed.

On the home front, our equivalent of the John Birch Society - the RSL or Returned Services League - has unanimously recommended that all adult males be compelled to practise rifle shooting. No doubt this both whips up bloodlust and the chauvinism which is only too sadly characteristic of many Australians. Like the statement of the U.S. general, it very blatantly ignores the facts of war in the atomic era. The U.S. with an accumulation of about 30,000 megatons and the USSR with an estimated 15,000 have sufficient weapons of destruction (the equivalent of 10 tons of TNT per person in the world) to destroy humanity.

Vietnam

The yellow press of Australia together with the war criminals in the Cabinet constantly pedal the monstrous lie that the cause of the war is " North Vietnam's attack on South Vietnam. "

Senator Fulbright, chairman of the US Foreign Affairs Committee in the Senate, has a rather different view of the war and its causes:

"In Vietnam, the U.S., at worst, inherited the position already lost by the French in an abandoned colonial war; or that, at best, we interfered misguidedly in a civil struggle that might have resolved itself sooner had not the U.S. intervened."

" I'm ashamed the United States - a big, magnanimous country - is picking on the little countries."

THE FAILURES OF THE YOUNG LEFT IN AUSTRALIA

The youth of Australia's left wing exhibit an in-groupism which is startling to one who knows something of the character of the young left in other capitalist countries. Currently, they won't be found drinking outside three pubs in Sydney; and they constitute, almost exclusively, the after seven population of one of these.

They patronise the same circle of parties where those outside the in-group are tacitly ignored should they ever dare to intrude.

Organizationally, the young left may be divided into two categories - (1) the youth groups affiliated, either formally or informally with the 'left' political parties, and (2) the university based student groups. Unfortunately, there are no significant trade union based groups of leftist youth. Where young people with tendencies towards the left are employed in industry, they tend to make their organisational base one of the groups associated with a political party, rather than forming a youth group with an industrial base.

This in-groupism has had two main political effects. Firstly, due to the relatively static membership of the young left, opportunities are available for violent factionalization. Secondly, as a direct result of this factionalization, in-groups exist within the in-group.

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The young left, thus, finds itself hampered as an effective force for social change for three reasons:

Firstly, it is difficult for an outsider to penetrate the movement - and thus the young left is failing to make inroads into the vast masses of politically unaware and apathetic Australian youth. It appeared for some time that the anti-war groups which came into being when the National Service Act was amended in 1964 would create a precedent for change in this respect. But Over-enthusiastic espousement of these groups by the young left institution has dashed any hopes in this direction. The argument that the left youth groups hold dances etc. in an attempt to attract new support will no doubt be advanced, but to invite a vaguely interested young person to a dance and then to demand his signature to the effect that he will up hold the principles of Marxism-Leninism, while at the same time, keeping him distant from the mood and workings of the group as a whole can hardly be expected to have lasting effects.

Secondly, the movement is wasting too much of its time and energy in conspiratorial factionalization. Internal criticisms of the group are discouraged under threat of expulsion or becoming part of an out-group. Great pains are taken to avoid letting so-and-so know that such-and-such a meeting will be held.

Thirdly, in-groupism in itself militates towards stagnation in leadership, especially where a bureaucratic organisational pattern favours this.

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Young people, unhampered as they are by material and emotional attachments to the status quo, bearing the brunt of economic injustice, and and being the victims of social oppression from all sides - parents and dops and school - constitute a potentially effective force for change. The young left insitutions as they

now exist are wasting their time.

They suffer an inevitable stagnation in leadership, and consequently in ideology. Little hope exists for reform from within.

What is required at this stage is the foundation of a new left-wing youth group. Such a group should be constituted so as to appeal to the young person, at present politically unaware, but feeling resentment against society as he knows it. It should be without rules and constitutions - nothing is more discouraging to a young person rebelling against society as it now exists than to be greeted with a rule book.

It should be open to young people of all or no political affiliations, and be unaffiliated with any political organisation.

It should have a dual function as an educational and organisational body. Talks and discussions on all of the various leftist philosophies should be combined with various forms of protest against war, censorship, economic and social injustice. An important aspect would also be social activites.

Such an organisation, with a name which does not bind it to any specific left wing ideology - "Left Youth" might be one possibility - would provide a basis for the organisation of Australia's revolutionary youth.

This body would wage the fight against capitalism and authoritarianism.

Kit Guyatt

WHITHER HUMANITY?

The incredible speed with which the great powere are amassing atom and hydrogen bombs is bringing the world to the edge of a precipice. One false step would reduce to ashes the results of the labour of many centuries. This danger is well known even to the supporters of today's society. Many creators of these weapons - like Oppenheimer - were called traitors because they regretted their bitter fruits.

There is no shortage of religious cant and prayers for the salvation of humanity. But the heavenly and earthly lords remain deaf. The rulers of both sides - so-called East and West - constantly call for more and bigger bombs. They are not interested in the fate of the people. To secure hegemony over the world they are prepared to destroy everything. Every one of them lives with the determination of being the victor.

Is there any salvation in this situation? Who has the power to avert the catastrophe? The people itself! But as long as the governments have control on weapons of destruction, humanity - the people - will be in constant danger. They will force the scientists to work for them and will force the people to liquidate one another.

The people themselves must take its destiny in its own hands - remove the rulers and abolish the causes of war. It is in the principle of government, and consequent exploitation that all past wars have been fought. It is only in the principle of mutual aid - a society of freedom and equality - that peace can be achieved.

G.K.

A TRIBUTE TO OUR BOYS IN VIETNAM

(Our political leaders have identified our soldiers with the tradition of Anzac. We reproduce hereunder a pamphlet published by Jack London entitled: A GOOD SOLDIER)

Young man, the lowest aim in your life is to be a good soldier. The good soldier never tries to distinguish right from wrong; he never thinks, never reasons, only obeys.

If he is ordered to fire on his fellow citizen, on his friend, on his neighbour, on his relatives, he obeys without hesitation.

If he is ordered to fire down a crowded street when the poor is clamouring for bread, he obeys, and sees the grey hairs of age stained with red, and the life tide gushing from the breasts of women, feeling neither remorse or sympathy.

If he is ordered off as one of a firing - squad to execute a hero or one whose sacrifices make him man's benefactor, he fires without hesitation, though he knows the bullet will pierce the noblest heart that ever beat in human breast.

A good soldier is a blind, heartless, soulless, murderous machine. He is not even a brute, for brutes only kill in self defence.

All that is human in him, all that is divine in him, all that constitutes the man, has been sworn away when he took the enlistment roll.

His mind, conscience, aye, his very soul, are in the keeping of his officer. No man can fall lower than a soldier - it is a depth beneath which we cannot go.

The Cry of a Buddhist Anarchist (condensed)

Victims of official sadism unite!
Our cause is just and we must fight -
Fight our obsequiousness born of fear based on ignorance -
Ignorance of the ubiquitousness of error -
Error that says we are naturally bad
And can hope for no deliverance -
Deliverance from samsara.

Now the authoritarian reptile has cunning -
He has imbued his victims with confusion -
Confusion between their good and his,
Even as his razor fangs slice their necks.

Masterful aggressive alcoholic Europeans:
Do you still not see how your little error has grown?
From the original sin of feeding on flesh
You have ripped, devoured, infested Mother Earth
Till now your young have no spirit
To give birth to unitive gladness.

A.B.

A tyrant is dead:

WAS IT MURDER?

" KILLING SHOCKS WORLD LEADERS " was a representative news heading for the announcement of Verwoerd's death.

The "Daily Telegraph" (Sydney) in an editorial proclaimed that the "senseless killing" had "shocked and sickened the whole world."

Indeed, even staunch opponents of Verwoerd hedged their comments with only the mildest reservations. Fairly typical was: "Dr Verwoerd was not a bad man, but a good and upright one, according to his light a Christian." (my emphasis)

Shocked as the leaders were (even African Prime Ministers expressed sympathy) the people of Africa, in contrast were jubilant. Thousands thronged the streets of Lagos and other cities to celebrate the passing of an enemy of humanity.

We do not know now the motives of the assassin. Or whether he is mentally unbalanced. David Pratt's attempt failed in 1960 and he subsequently committed "suicide" in one of Verwoerd's institutions. The refinements of civilised torture probably await Dimitrio Tsafendas also.

I will assume that the motive was that which inspired the first attempt - hatred of apartheid.

It has been said that the killing was " a monstrous betrayal of democracy. " The assumption being that South Africa is such. But the disfranchisement of the great majority of a country, the imprisonment of opponents of the regime for their opinions, and the virtual police state which South Africa is cannot be reconciled with such.

The question then becomes the classic one - is tyrranicide justified. Throughout the ages opinion has been divided. Some doctors of the Church have defended it (e.g. St Augustine).

Leo Tolstoy - the great pacifist anarchist - declared that all violence, even in self-defence was wrong. But while we respect such a position we think that self-defence is a basic right of humanity.

The killing of a tyrant is self-defence.

Bill Dwyer

THE PRIESTS AND PEACE

Now that Cardinal Gilroy, the Anglican bishops and the Presbyterian ministers have approved the war in Vietnam, the great majority of Christians can kill there in good conscience.

In 1930 an international congress of Churchmen invited Einstein to address them. Excusing himself he said:

"Had I been able to address your congress, I would have said in the course of history, the priests have been responsible for much strife and war among human beings. They have much to atone for. They have usually been the slaves of the organised powers of hate."

W.D.

Sydney Anarchist Group, P.O. Box A389, Sydney South, New South Wales.